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Tactical-National Intelligence Interface Studies

Report on the

PILOT STUDY ON NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT TO FIELD COMMANDERS

Top Secret

12 January 1976

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

25X1 A. *PURPOSE AND STUDY ORGANIZATION*

25X1 1. The Pilot Study on National Intelligence Support to Field Commanders responds to an agreement between the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence to conduct a pilot study to size problems in the tactical-national intelligence interface, develop study procedures, and gain insight into possibilities for mutual support between the national foreign intelligence community and the military operating forces.

25X1 2. The study provides a basis for recommendations by the Joint Chiefs of Staff regarding National Foreign Intelligence Program support that could be made available to satisfy theater intelligence needs for a contingency operation in the and follow-on studies of the tactical-national intelligence interface. In addition, the study assesses theater capabilities to meet sample national requirements for the contingency situation, and identifies and documents other actions that relate to tactical-national intelligence relationships.

25X1 3. The study group was chaired jointly by representatives of the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence, who also served as the Joint Staff and IC Staff members of the study group. Other study group members were appointed by each military Service, CIA, USEUCOM, DIA, NSA and NRO. A Theater Working Group, chaired by DIA, developed and assessed theater information needs and capabilities. A National Working Group chaired by the IC Staff developed and assessed national foreign intelligence information needs and capabilities.

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25X1 B. *BACKGROUND, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCOPE*

25X1 1. The most critical aspect of the pilot study is the comparison of national-level foreign intelligence needs and capabilities with those of the operating forces. Competing priorities, relationships between operations and intelligence and between resources and capabilities, and responsibilities for equipping, maintaining, and commanding the military forces have caused the JCS and the Services to believe that tactical commanders cannot count on the continuing availability of national intelligence support in wartime. In their operational and force development planning, therefore, they believe it essential that military departments and commands retain and control their organic and direct support intelligence capabilities.

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2. Over the past several years, management interest in intelligence has tended to focus on achieving savings by eliminating duplication and consolidating intelligence activities across Services and agencies under executive agents. The resource implications have tended to cause legitimate concern among the Services that their resource management responsibilities for and command control over organic and direct support intelligence assets could be adversely affected, degrading the war-fighting capabilities of the forces.

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3. Terms of Reference for this pilot study are at Appendix 1, Annex A. The study group found it necessary to permit some deviations from the Terms of Reference. These deviations, detailed in Chapter I, affected procedures, but not the purpose, direction or intent of the pilot study. The following are the most significant deviations:

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a. To consider only theater intelligence and related assets assigned to the Joint Task Force committed to the contingency operation in the study scenario.

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b. To use sample essential elements of information (EEI) developed by the working group chairmen and USEUCOM representatives.

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c. To omit the explicit determination of the effect that additional tasking for the contingency situation would have on the primary missions of national systems and the quality of their responsiveness.

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d. To omit determination of peacetime tasking of national systems that could be reduced or terminated to accommodate tasking for the contingency situation.

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e. To consider only national intelligence capabilities in or directly related to the NFIP.

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4. To create a manageable situation for a first, in-depth effort to understand the complexities of tactical-national relationships, the scope of the pilot study was limited:

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b. To those theater intelligence forces available to USCINCEUR for the specific contingency situation;

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c. To intelligence capabilities operational by 31 December 1974; and

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d. To the political situation that obtained during the October 1973 Mid East war.

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C. SCENARIO AND STUDY ASSUMPTIONS

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1. USCINCEUR proposed USEUCOM [redacted]

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[redacted] as the source for the pilot study scenario. Chapter II discusses USEUCOM [redacted] and scenario development. This scenario permitted assessment of a broad range of national intelligence assets against representative theater EEI, and consideration of intelligence priorities between the national and theater levels.

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2. Chapter II lists a number of assumptions made by the study group that affected the outcome of the study. The most significant among these were: that the contingency situation posed threats of Soviet attacks against the U.S. and the European central region; that EEI provided for the pilot study were a true representative sample; that theater collection and reporting assets identified by USCINCEUR would be available and would operate against theater EEI; that all national and departmental level collection and reporting assets in the NFIP were available for consideration for tasking against theater EEI; and that adequate resources (funds and manpower) would be available for national and theater collection and reporting assets.

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D. *THEATER INFORMATION NEEDS AND INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITIES*

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1. For this pilot study, a sample of 82 EEI represented theater information needs for the conduct of conventional offensive operations under the scenario. The sample has at least one entry for each type of EEI that would be included in a comprehensive listing. Since the sample is not comprehensive, however, it does not provide a basis for analysis of requirements in quantitative terms, identification of recurrent requirements, volume assessments, or application of the priorities established by USEUCOM and its component commands.

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3. Most theater intelligence assets assessed in the study are organic to combat units assigned to the Joint Task Force. Of the 40 units and activities included, 24 are HUMINT, six COMINT, two IMAGERY, three MASINT, and five multi-sensor. Only six of these assets are in the NFIP.

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E. *NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITIES AND NATIONAL STRATEGIC EEI*

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1. National foreign intelligence assets available for collecting and reporting against theater EEI were selected on the basis of their availability and apparent capability to support a theater commander without a system or design change. The deployment of national intelligence assets for the study was based on actual experience in crises.

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2. In some cases, study assumptions for use of national assets permitted assessments despite problem areas beyond the scope of the study. These assumptions permitted a data base to be established under near-ideal conditions. Effects of individual, real-world problems could then be applied to individual systems and groupings of systems.

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3. The study group found no officially approved national strategic EEI applicable to a worldwide crisis, such as was postulated by USCINCEUR for the

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study. A sample set of assumed national strategic EEI was developed by the National Working Group and agreed to by the National Intelligence Officers. They provided a basis for judgments as to the extent to which national assets might be available to work against theater EEI. Of the 57 assumed national strategic EEI, 40 are identical to theater EEI and were included in the evaluation.

F. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS*

1. Mutual Intelligence Support

a. *Conclusion:* A large number of studies and activities address various aspects of tactical-national intelligence relationships. Each of these relates in some way to improving intelligence support to field commanders. There has been, however, only limited effort to pull together the results of these studies, collate and synthesize the lessons learned from them, or develop a coordinated approach for further work.

Recommendation: Before undertaking new or follow-on efforts, a joint JCS-IC Staff element should review all studies and activities relating to the tactical-national intelligence interface, synthesize their results, identify and prioritize specific problem areas, and develop a plan for further work.

b. *Conclusion:* Understanding interaction between intelligence and operations in a combat environment is the key to the tactical-national intelligence interface. To the combat commander, intelligence is an essential element of his force. National intelligence assets that cannot meet his reporting timeliness and accuracy requirements in combat are not adequate for tactical intelligence support in wartime.

Recommendation: The JCS and the Intelligence Community should continue jointly to make national and tactical intelligence assets mutually supportive in conflict situations. Development of a conceptual framework to describe and rationalize the division of labor should be pursued as a matter of priority.

c. *Conclusion:* There is no known documentation for national information needs and priorities in wartime.

Recommendation: The United States Intelligence Board should be requested to address this problem.

d. *Conclusion:* The static matrix approach did not permit consideration of the dynamics of the operational environment. In wartime, intelligence capabilities would be subject to attrition, countermeasures and communications degradation that can be assessed best in a gaming approach.

Recommendation: The JCS and IC Staff should jointly assess dynamic gaming methodologies for use in any follow-on studies.

e. *Conclusion:* With adequate planning, each set of assets (theater and national) can offset significant deficiencies in the other. The entire intelligence picture could be improved, for example, by informing field commanders of the targets in their areas of interest that will be tasked to national assets. National systems could cover

*In reviewing the respective capabilities of national and tactical assets to respond to established EEI, DIA notes that less stringent criteria were utilized in measuring the abilities of national assets to respond than was the case for tactical assets.

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some high-priority theater targets, permitting tactical commanders to employ their organic and direct support intelligence assets on combat intelligence needs that they otherwise would not be able to cover.

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Recommendation: Develop procedures to coordinate national targets with theater collection plans at appropriate levels, to include a mechanism for rapidly notifying commanders of targets scheduled for national assets.

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f. *Conclusion:* Theater assets supporting the Joint Task Force have an even or better than even chance of satisfying about 80 percent of the theater EEI sample. The majority of theater EEI that could not be covered by theater assets with any degree of certainty related to intentions, judgments and similar intangibles. Sixteen theater EEI could not be satisfied by theater assets with high or moderate confidence within the time constraints specified by USEUCOM. Of these, national assets could contribute significantly to the satisfaction of nine. (Details regarding this conclusion are in Chapter V.)

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(1) Four EEI that could not be satisfied by theater assets could be satisfied by national assets with high or moderate confidence and within the timeliness criteria. These four EEI focused on needs for information outside the area of operations and on capabilities.

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(2) The remaining five of the nine EEI to which national systems could contribute significantly, and theater systems could not, concerned primarily weapons location and capabilities of enemy forces.

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Recommendation: The capabilities of national intelligence assets identified in paragraphs A.6.a and A.6.b, Chapter V, should be evaluated, updated and tested in joint exercises to determine the extent to which they can support theater intelligence plans. Following the evaluation, and in coordination with USCINCEUR and the IC Staff, the JCS should recommend to the Secretary of Defense and Director of Central Intelligence specific options for theater support by these national intelligence systems.

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g. *Conclusion:* Although the capabilities of theater intelligence assets decrease with distance from the combat zone, theater assets can make a significant contribution to national-level intelligence needs and can offset deficiencies in national capabilities to collect and report on combat operations. Specifically:

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(1) Forty theater EEI were of interest to national authorities. Theater assets had an even or better than even chance of satisfying 90 percent of these, assuming that timeliness requirements at the national level are the same as those of the combat forces.

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(2) For the study scenario, theater assets appeared to be better able than national assets to satisfy about one-third of the theater EEI considered to be of equal national-level interest.

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Recommendation: Theater intelligence capabilities should be explicitly considered in national intelligence planning for crisis and contingency situations.

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2. Future Actions (Study Related)

a. *Conclusions:* Computer programs and data base developed through collaboration with DIA are responsive to paragraph 2.b. of the Study Terms of Reference.

Recommendation: These programs should be further refined during follow-on studies with a view toward making them available for planning and allocating intelligence assets.

b. *Conclusion:* The confidence factor judgments of the degree to which EEI can be satisfied are composites of the several questions into which each EEI can be factored. The judgments, while acceptable for the limited purpose of the pilot study, lack the specificity for timeliness, accuracy and priority that would be needed for intelligence planning analysis.

Recommendation: EEI for future studies of this type should be factored into specific questions. Capabilities judgments should be displayed for each EEI and its component questions. In addition, to accommodate assessment of scenario-constrained capabilities, each EEI should be clearly related to the specific scenario times and events to which it applies.

c. *Conclusion:* Periodic theater readiness assessments include theater intelligence assets. Theater staffs understand the capabilities and limitations of these assets, can assess their mission impact, and have ready access to detailed data concerning them. Initial assessments of theater capabilities for follow-on studies, therefore, can be made best in-theater.

Recommendation: For follow-on studies, Unified & Specified (U&S) commanders should be requested to provide initial assessments of theater capabilities and intelligence needs. The task of matching requirements to national assets would be done best at the Washington level.

d. *Conclusion:* There is little confidence in current capabilities to differentiate tactical nuclear munitions from other types of munitions in the combat zone.

Recommendation: A follow-on study should specifically address capabilities to identify and characterize munition types in the combat zone.

e. *Conclusions:* There are three combat intelligence problem areas that appear to have worldwide applicability:

(1) Intelligence relating to battlefield intentions, judgments, and similar intangibles cannot be collected and reported with certainty.

(2) Intelligence capabilities of combat forces decrease with distance from the combat zone.

(3) Timeliness under combat conditions is one of the most difficult criteria to meet, yet one of the most critical to the combat commander.

Recommendation: Follow-on studies should address these problem areas specifically, with a view toward generalized solutions that can be incorporated in military doctrine and tactics.

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f. *Conclusion:* Actual experience factors were not available for the analysis of the capabilities of the entire range of collection, reporting and communication systems.

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Recommendation: Capabilities based on actual experience, where they are not now available, should be identified in a future study.

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g. *Conclusion:* The study organization—a study group of principals supported by two working groups, one focusing on national and the other on theater capabilities and needs—adequately represented the divergent and often conflicting interests of the many organizations participating in the pilot study.

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Recommendation: The organization for any future studies should ensure adequate representation for all divergent views.

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h. *Conclusion:* The study was sponsored by the DCI and Secretary of Defense, and co-chaired by their representatives. Study participants dealt with matters of intelligence, operations and command and control. Honest differences regarding interaction between intelligence and operations in combat and associated resource allocations surfaced issues that could not be resolved at the level of the study participants.

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Recommendation: Insure future study participation at a level that can address basic issues.

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i. *Conclusion:* Study and working group members participated in the pilot study as an additional duty, severely limiting the time they could devote to data collection and analysis for the study.

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Recommendation: Depending upon the scope of any future study, consideration should be given to assignment of a nucleus of full-time personnel.

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